

Keep A Casino Out of Danbury!!!

Tribal Recognition Process

The Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is the agency in charge of tribal recognition. There are seven criteria that an applicant must meet in order to be recognized as a tribe. The criteria are very specific, requiring much work and time on the part of an applicant. The Schaghticokes have been working on their application for 20 years.

Over a year ago the Schaghticokes were **denied** preliminary recognition, because they did not meet the criteria of (1) being a continuous autonomous body since pre-colonial times, and (2) submitting a complete list of members. In January of this year, the BIA reversed its finding after the tribe submitted additional information.

I was with our Attorney General Richard Blumenthal that day, and joined with him in questioning the BIA's flip-flop, and asking why it happened, as it appeared suspicious to me. I agreed with Attorney General Blumenthal that Connecticut **must** immediately appeal this decision. The BIA appeal is going forward right now. If the BIA internal appeals process is unsuccessful, the state will appeal the decision in federal court.

This effort could take years to complete. I'm very pleased that both the City of Danbury and all of the surrounding towns have joined us as parties to the appeal.

State Legislation

Meanwhile, I have joined with my legislative colleagues and the Attorney General in exploring additional state laws that could help prevent the location of a casino in Danbury. We are being very careful, on the advice of the Attorney General, not to consider any act that would complicate the appeals process. I **would** support measures such as requiring a casino to be subject to the environmental impact and protection laws, employment laws, and public health and safety laws of our state.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE BOB GODFREY



Bob & Attorney General Richard Blumenthal

Casino Permitting Process

When the **Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs** receives a proposal from a federally recognized tribe to open a casino, it takes an extraordinarily long time for the process to be completed-as long as 5 years. Thanks to several changes we've made in state laws, the process can take even longer. The procedure is a long, complex one and provides Danbury and the state ample ability to have our say.

If a recognized tribe asks for a casino, the Interior Secretary must submit the tribe's proposal to the Governor and Attorney General. The state will comment on whether:

- 1) The state **agrees** with the proposal,
- 2) The proposal is **consistent with state law**, and
- 3) The gaming activities are **permitted** in state for any purposes.

The Secretary of the Interior then determines if it addresses all federal requirements and is consistent with the Federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act under which tribal gaming is permitted. This act requires gaming be conducted **only** on federally recognized reservation land.

Since Connecticut recently repealed the "**Las Vegas Nights**" statute, which was cited to allow the other casinos, the Attorney General could argue that a casino is not consistent with state law. The Attorney General is confident that this argument will disqualify a casino.

The other good news for Connecticut is that the Schaghticoke have shown no intention of building a casino on their current reservation in Kent. They want to acquire property elsewhere. This process can take years. The tribe would need to petition the Federal Government to hold it in trust for them. After property is located, the Interior Secretary must certify that the tribe requires the land for economic development. This is a long legal and legislative process that's made significantly worse if they try to do it in a community that does not welcome a casino. We may also consider new legislation that will not allow casinos on non-ancestral land.

After obtaining land, the Interior Secretary makes a final decision to either allow gaming or denies the proposal. Due to a new state law, any proposal, or **compact**, negotiated by the governor and the tribe, must be approved by the state legislature. This is sure to extend the process, especially if the proposal does not provide any protections or benefits for impacted communities and the state.

Bottom Line

There are many obstacles to placing a casino in Danbury. The process alone can take anywhere from **four to eleven years**. I will work hard to see that we use every tool available on your behalf. I will work with our Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, with my colleagues in the legislature from the greater Danbury area, and leaders from neighboring towns. Together we can fight against a casino in Danbury.

any questions or comments? contact Bob Godfrey at 800-842-1902



Dear Neighbor,

Many of you have recently contacted me, opposing the possibility of a casino being built in Danbury. I'm sure you have seen the news regarding the Schaghticoke Indian Tribe receiving their recognition from the Federal Government, and their desire to open a casino. I wanted to assure you that this process is far from over.

I have been working closely with Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, whose leadership on this matter has been extraordinary. He has offered invaluable advice to the legislature and local officials to ensure we defeat any effort to place a casino in the area, or in Connecticut.

In 2001, my annual constituent survey asked you if you wanted a casino in Danbury. An overwhelming **75% of you said you did not want a casino in Danbury**. Most of you had the same concerns that I do:

- ✓ Crime rates could jump substantially;
- ✓ Major businesses in Danbury have publicly stated that they will leave and take thousands of high paying, highly skilled jobs with them if a casino is built;
- ✓ Casinos create mostly low paying, unskilled jobs;
- ✓ Traffic congestion on Interstate 84 and 95, as well as on state and local roadways, can increase by 45%;
- ✓ Compulsive gambling will cause incredible damage to families and children;
- ✓ Huge costs to the state are an element of casinos, especially in public safety expenses and revenue services.

This is why I'm dedicated to fighting against this casino for you. Here's some information about the process.

Sincerely,

State Representative

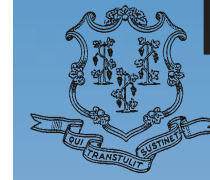
PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HARTFORD, CT
Permit No. 3937

Please Contact Me!!!

bob
GODFREY
deputy majority leader

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 4107
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

Danbury: 778-5127
Toll-free: 1-800-842-1902
bob.godfrey@po.state.ct.us



bob
GODFREY
state representative

Danbury - 110th



Don't Bet on a
Casino in Danbury